

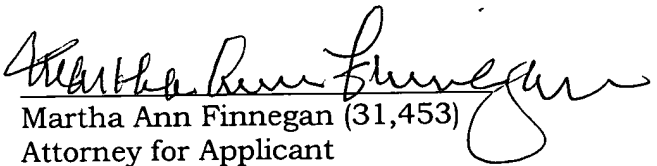
matter has been added by virtue of the amendments made to the specification.

The PCT Abstract has been replaced by a new page 18. No new matter has been introduced.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the submissions made herein, the undersigned attorney would appreciate the opportunity to do so. Thus the Examiner is hereby invited to call the undersigned, collect at the number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: 1 October 2001

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend page 1 of the specification by inserting the following before current Paragraph No. **[0001]**:

-- **CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

[0001] This application is the Section 371(c) filing of copending PCT Application No., PCT/US99/28756 filed 3 December 1999, which designated the United States. This application also claims domestic priority from the following copending and commonly owned provisional applications, U.S.S.N. 60/111,005, filed 4 December 1998, and U.S.S.N. 60/111,011, filed 4 December 1998. --

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the PCT Abstract with the attached Abstract provided on new page number 18. The new Abstract reads as follows:

-- **ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Off-gas from a carbon black furnace is employed as a combustion gas feed stream to the burner or combustion zone of the same or a different carbon black furnace in accordance with certain embodiments, suitable conduit and valving is provided to pass off-gas, from which carbon black has been substantially removed, from any or all of multiple different carbon black furnaces to the burner. The off-gas is heated, preferably by plasma heating, and dewatered. Carbon dioxide stripping or rather

stripping of gas components from the dewatered heated off-gas is found to be unnecessary to achieve economically favorable use of off-gas recirculation. --